

STATE OF MARYLAND & 201 W. PRESTON STREET IN

THE HER

DEFICE BUILDING

This report was prepared by the Maryland Department of Health's Office of the Secretary, with contributions from across the Department.

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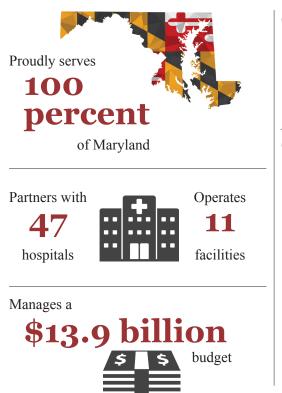
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The Maryland Department of Health

Maryland's health care delivery system consists of public and private hospitals, nursing homes, outpatient clinics, home health care services, hospices, providers, and health educators, among others. As a public health department, the goal of the Maryland Department of Health is to improve the health status of every Maryland resident and to ensure access to quality health care. We are responsible for helping each person live a life free from the threat of communicable diseases, tainted foods, and dangerous products. To assist in our mission, we regulate health care providers, facilities, and organizations. We also manage direct services to patients.

Maryland Department of Health employees work together to promote and improve the health and safety of all Marylanders and strive to support the Department's vision of lifelong health and wellness for all Marylanders through a number of customer service touch points across the Department. Consequently, the Department's customer service focus is on every person, every contact, every day.

At a Glance



Oversees

23 Local Health Departments andthe Baltimore City Health Department24 Boards and Commissions

Composed of

6,654 employees

FY18 Customer Service Highlights

Refined the Department Structure: The Maryland Department of Health continues to assess the structure of the Department to improve customer service through streamlined, centralized services and enhanced communications, while adapting to the state's ever-evolving health care needs.

Implemented Visual Identity Standards: As part of an ongoing exercise in brand development, Department employees use more consistent representation of the Department's messaging — both visually and verbally — to support the Department's mission and enhance accessibility to health information and services.

Listened to our Customers: Sought customer input through multiple platforms to better and more efficiently respond to concerns, inquiries, and needs.

Refreshed our Customer Service Approach: Ensured that all Department employees continue to improve customer service skills through formal training, both in-person and online, using best practices in customer service.

Reduced Delays in Services: Improved processing times for Departmental services, helping customers more easily complete transactions.

Improved Customer Responses: Shortened response turnaround time on all Department correspondence channels through updated software and advanced management solutions.

Reached a Wider Audience: Used social media channels to further reach audiences with important information related to services offered, upcoming events, education, awareness, and Department news.

Recognition Given to Maryland Department of Health Employees

Employee Recognition Awards

The Department recognized the accomplishments of its employees in the areas of customer service, innovation, and exceptional performance at the Annual Employee Recognition Awards Ceremony, held in June. There were 48 individual awards and 24 team awards announced at this year's event. Additionally, employee recognition activities and events are held at various sites and locations throughout the Department, year-round.

Employee Service Awards

The Department regularly recognizes the state service of its employees who have achieved their milestone service of 30, 35, 40, 45, and 50 years. This year, 167 employees reached their milestone service years, including two employees who received awards for 50 years of state service.

At a Glance

Following are some of the Department's employees who were recognized during this year's Annual Employee Recognition Awards, both for accomplishments in customer service, innovation, and exceptional performance, as well as for milestone years of service to the State.



Smith Williams, Jr., an employee of Springfield Hospital Center, accepts his award from Secretary Robert Neall for 50 years of dedicated service to the State of Maryland.





The Eastern Shore Hospital Center Maintenance Department

Amanda Barefield



The Salmonella Kiambu Outbreak Investigation team



The "Wear the Cost" website team

Amanda Barefield was recognized for continuing with her inspection at a local pharmacy after it was interrupted by two masked and armed men who jumped over the counter and demanded opioids.

The Eastern Shore Hospital Center Maintenance Department was able to quickly transform an assisted living program into a state-of-the-art inpatient psychiatric unit to address a shortfall of inpatient psychiatric beds and provide timely care for some of our state's sickest and most vulnerable patients.

The "Wear the Cost" website team created an innovative, consumer-focused, price transparency website that enables Marylanders to compare hospital prices for common medical procedures.

The Salmonella Kiambu Outbreak Investigation team successfully investigated a salmonella outbreak using advanced epidemiologic, food protection, and laboratory methods. They found the culprit — certain papayas — and issued the advisory a month sooner than the U.S. Food and Drug Administration was able to confirm Maryland's findings and issue a nationwide recall. This averted the infection of potentially hundreds of consumers nationally.

Leadership Analysis of FY18 and Summary of FY19 Customer Service Approach

The Maryland Department of Health continues to build upon its successes in implementing the goals of the Governor's Customer Service Initiative. This includes outstanding service delivery across the Department, improved communications with customers, expedited response to customer correspondence, and enhanced customer service training.

Customer Satisfaction Survey results provided by the Governor's Office of Performance Improvement have helped further identify programs with significant room for customer service opportunities and refinement.

Additionally, the Department engaged with various community stakeholders across the state to identify ways to provide services more effectively and efficiently and to work more constructively and collaboratively.

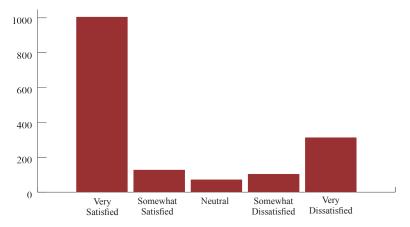
Through enhanced communications, collaboration, and partnership with our local, state, and federal partners, great strides have been made toward improved service delivery across the state.

In FY19, the Department will further refine the measurement of its progress to help identify where and how to devote resources for maximal customer service improvement. This includes enhanced customer service trainings, a more thoughtful, empathetic, and individual approach to customer correspondence, and customer-focused website improvements with expanded online services to better meet customers through their preferred medium, at their preferred time.

Detailed FY18 Customer Service Results and FY19 Customer Service Plans

Voice of the Customer — Survey Results

The Governor's Customer Service Initiative — specifically the Customer Satisfaction Survey — has been a valuable tool offering a vantage point by which the Department has been able to assess targeted areas in need of improved customer service. A chart dealing with our FY18 Customer Service Satisfaction Survey results is below.



The goal of the Department is to reach "Very Satisfied" upon every encounter. That being said, our FY18 Customer Satisfaction Survey results show about 75 percent of respondents were left "Very Satisfied" or "Somewhat Satisfied" with their interaction with the Department. Of those results, about 90 percent were "Very Satisfied" and 10 percent were "Somewhat Satisfied."

For each dissatisfied survey the Department receives, the Office of Constituent and Customer Service reaches out to the customer by telephone and email to ascertain how the Department could have better met their needs and to offer further assistance where applicable. Invariably, customers are very pleased with the personal attention and expeditious follow-up, and effort to resolve issues.

Other administrations within the Department have additional mechanisms for customer service outreach and improvement. For example, the Behavioral Health Administration (BHA) conducts Customer Perception of Care Surveys focused on adults and caregivers of children with mental health issues and substance use disorders.

Throughout FY19, the Department will continue to leverage the Customer Satisfaction Survey results to identify patterns and opportunities within the respective administrations that would benefit from in-person customer service trainings, in addition to the Online Customer Service Training, which is expected to be completed by all Department employees.

Customer Service Training

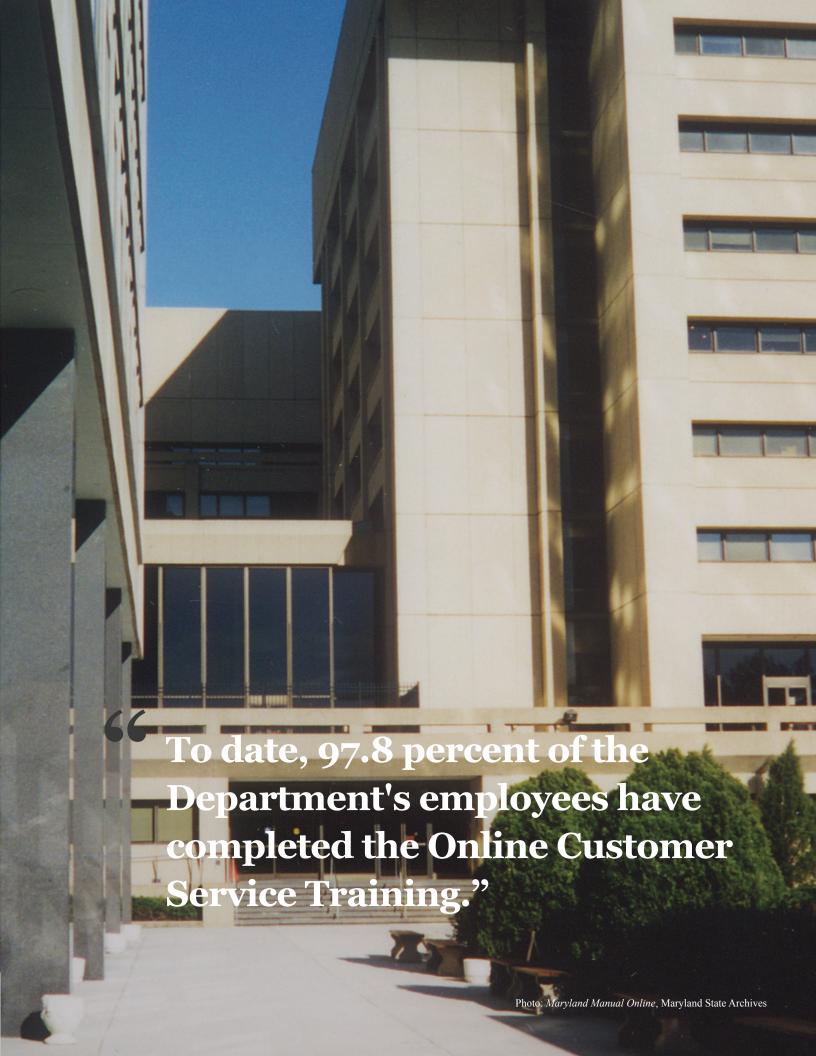
A detailed presentation on the Governor's Customer Promise is now part of the monthly New Employee Orientation. During this presentation, messaging about the Online Customer Service Training is shared with the clear directive that every employee is to complete the training within the first month of employment.

To date, 97.8 percent of the Department's employees have completed the Online Customer Service Training.

Additionally, the Office of Training Services and the Office of Constituent and Customer Service recently started conducting in-person trainings throughout the Department, large in part based on results from the Customer Satisfaction Survey.

There are additional program-specific customer service training efforts underway as well. The Vital Statistics Administration (VSA) conducts in-person customer service training when new call center employees are hired and BHA includes customer service training during their monthly all-employee meetings.

An update and refinement of the Online Customer Service Training is underway for FY19 to move the dial even further on customer service and satisfaction.



Customer Inquiry Response Times and Overall Time-to-Resolution

Customer Contact Centers

The Department is vast and complex, comprising multiple administrations, offices, programs, hospitals, and local health departments, using a variety of phone systems.

Medicaid, for example, utilizes a dedicated internal call center for multiple areas within the administration while also working with a third-party call center for other key programs.

BHA recently partnered with Maryland 211 to offer mental health and substance use disorder services 24 hours a day, seven days a week to Marylanders. The call center — Maryland Crisis Connect — has a dedicated website that offers text and chat features, as well as multiple online resources.

The VSA is in the process of transitioning to a customer contact center model, with calls tracked and monitored through system software.

One of the Customer Service priorities for the Department in FY19 are our call centers. The Department will be closely evaluating and assessing each call center in every administration throughout the next several months and will make appropriate improvements for a more streamlined, customer friendly approach.

Timeliness of Responding to Customer Inquiries

To improve responsiveness to customer requests, the Department is continually identifying new and better ways for customers to reach the Department through all channels including phone, email, and online.

Telephone systems have been updated and expanded to more efficiently handle high call volumes. Through analysis of the call data to the Department's main phone line, the automated voice response unit was successfully revised to better connect callers directly to the right area of the Department without the need to be transferred. This update has significantly reduced the number of people who have had to "zero out" to be assisted in finding the appropriate area within the Department.

As of September 2017, Medicaid implemented a provider enrollment call center via the vendor, Automated Health Systems (AHS), which increased the hours of operation from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. to 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. to better accommodate providers' schedules.

The Board of Nursing added additional lines to its phone system to improve its response to customers.

The Department responds to inquiries submitted to the Contact Us link prominently displayed on its homepage in less than 24 hours. Since January 2018, the Department has received and handled more than 5,000 inquiries through this medium and the increased volume of inquiries indicate this is a preferred method of communication.

The Department revised and expanded its internal process to address customer correspondence, improving both the quality and timeliness of responses.

Many administrations within the Department have employed dashboards and other solutions to better monitor the effectiveness and quality of the responses as well as the timeliness of replies. For example:

- The Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA) responds to verbal inquiries within 24 hours, written correspondence within five business days, and after-hours messages are returned the next business day
- VSA responds to most walk-in requests in 20 minutes, Electronic Vital Records Registration Systems requests within one hour, and Internet and phone certificate requests in three to five business days or less
- The Office of Population Health Improvement responds to parent, superintendent, health care provider, and school health partner inquiries within 24 hours
- The State Health Improvement Process (SHIP) requests are acknowledged on the same business day and requests are addressed within five business days
- The Compliance Unit evaluators within BHA acknowledge phone and email complaints within 24 hours and final reports are issued within 14 days of investigation completion
- Spring Grove Hospital Center completes 94 percent of their court-ordered psychiatric evaluations in fewer days than is considered standard

Best Practices

Following are examples of customer service best practices implemented across the Department.

The Office of Communications implemented new visual identity standards for the Department's core administrations, as part of a larger and ongoing re-branding strategy. Developing brand strategy and implementing visual identity standards reinforce the integral message of service and professionalism to:

- Support the Department's mission
- Enhance accessibility to health information and services
- Maintain consistent meaning and messaging across the entire Department
- · Improve communications, business processes, and customer service
- Strengthen each administration, office, and service

Process improvements to the customer correspondence system have tremendously improved response times. Employees now have direct access to the Governor's Correspondence System to enable faster receipt of correspondence and shorter response times. Responses are generated through written responses (emails or letters), telephone calls, or meetings.

A global tracking system for customer inquiries to the Department has been expanded through the Internet Quorum (IQ) system.

Medicaid collaborated with vendor AHS to create webinars to assist providers in navigating ePREP. In doing so, the call center continues to improve and decrease call wait times.

As part of the Department's commitment to improving customer service and patient care, the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Accreditation Project conducted two types of statewide provider surveys. One was an online survey sent via hard copy to all SUD providers currently certified by the Office of Health Care Quality, as well as electronically by each jurisdiction's local addictions authority/local behavioral health authority. The second was a series of on-site regional feedback sessions in which providers representing programs of various sizes, accreditation levels, and geographical regions, provided direct feedback to the project team.

BHA surveyed the public about its perceptions of people with substance abuse disorders and used that response data to craft public educational and awareness campaigns to increase customer participation in care. This included more than 50 workshops held throughout the state.

Many administrations within the Department have employed various software solutions to better manage workloads and improve its service to the public.

- BHA developed "data dashboards" to help monitor services and trends to improve outcomes
- DDA developed an "Encounter" tracking tool, used by all DDA employees to record and manage inquiries from the public. Periodic review helps inform management decision making
- Several processes were modified to improve the flow of customers in the Division of Vital Records lobby. The implementation of an electronic death registration system significantly reduced wait times to register for death records

Plans for Improvement

VSA will soon implement a new customer relationship management system and call center to improve customer contacts and they are also in the process of developing more user-friendly web content.

VSA is also working closely with medical and funeral facilities to identify ways of reducing errors made by the facilities through the birth and death record submission process. They will also augment training materials through increased on-site and video trainings at these facilities. This error reduction will save time and the burden of paperwork for customers.

Medicaid and BHA surveyed Medicaid and behavioral health providers to improve both customer service and the provider experiences.



Improving the Customer Experience from Multiple Perspectives

DDA is identifying ways and new processes for headquarters to work more seamlessly with its four regional offices, which will significantly improve both employee and customer satisfaction.

BHA increased the number of individuals trained to use the medication for opioid overdose, Naloxone, in Overdose Response Programs from 28,191 in FY17 to 39,250 in FY18. BHA also increased the number of doses dispensed from 36,306 in FY17 to 41,915 in FY18, including 164 outreach sessions across Baltimore City.

BHA expanded access to state inpatient psychiatric hospitals by adding an additional 60 beds and developed the capacity for even more.

Medicaid introduced a transportation pilot for the local community of Garrett County with the vision that this effort will assist in establishing a stable transportation system for the county's citizens.

Medicaid consolidated the Opioid Prior Authorization form so that seven out of nine managed care organizations (MCOs) and Fee-for-Service teams were able to use the same form. The form was created by working with multiple individuals throughout the Department as well as key stakeholders, including major health systems such as the Johns Hopkins Medical Institutions, The University of Maryland Medical Systems, and MedStar Health. By implementing this "Unified" Opioid Prior Authorization form, an administrative burden was removed, thus assisting in supporting expedient patient access to care.

The Department received Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approval for two new Medicaid home and community-based services waivers for people with developmental disabilities. Medicaid worked closely with DDA on the waiver proposals — the new Family Supports Waiver and Community Supports Waiver — which will make services available to 800 additional people on DDA's waiting list.

Staff performing site visits to assess and monitor compliance with federal requirements for home and community-based settings have been working after-hours in order to accommodate participant availability and provider requests. 35 to 40 percent of the site visits are performed during evening

hours, four days per week. The utilization control agent conducted site visits to medical day care centers where there was a concentration of participants who had appealed level of care denials. Face-to-face reviews resulted in level of care approval for 13 out of 15 participants who were seen, thus avoiding a hearing on the appeal at the Office of Administrative Hearings.

In October 2017, Medicaid approved Aetna Better Health as an MCO. There are now nine MCOs operating in Maryland. The Aetna Better Health network of providers gives HealthChoice beneficiaries in Baltimore City and 15 counties more choices when selecting their health care provider. The Aetna Better Health MCO operates in Allegany, Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Calvert, Carroll, Cecil, Charles, Frederick, Garrett, Harford, Howard, Montgomery, Prince George's, St. Mary's, and Washington Counties as well as in Baltimore City.

The Prevention and Health Promotion Administration's (PHPA) Supplemental Nutrition Program for Woman, Infants, and Children (WIC) went to an electronic system, known as eWIC, in July. Benefits are now loaded into an account that can be accessed through use of a plastic eWIC card, which is similar to other types of debit and credit card systems. Remaining benefits are printed on the purchase slip, and can be viewed online or through a mobile app. Implementation of eWIC allows changes to food prescriptions to be made for clients remotely and allows customers with limited transportation to receive nutrition education over the phone and to have future benefits loaded to their account as needed. eWIC also allows faster payment of WIC transactions to WIC-authorized grocers.

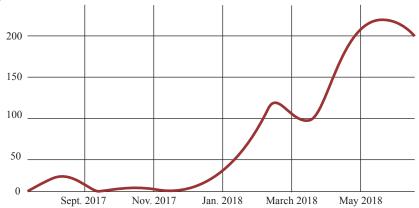
PHPA's Environmental Health Bureau developed two new systems for the Youth Camps Program — the electronic payments system and the application management system. Youth camp fees can now be paid electronically by credit card or e-check and applications can now be completed online, which allows applicants to see the status of their applications, find out what information is still needed, and when the application approval process should be completed. By moving these systems online, the new process is streamlined; greatly improving customer service.

The Supplemental Security Income, Social Security Disability Insurance, Outreach, Access, and Recovery (SOAR) program assists individuals with mental illness and substance abuse disorders to get Social Security benefits. SOAR has processed almost 15,000 applications, giving Maryland the highest approval rate of all initial claims in the U.S. (93 percent). Of those living in a shelter at the time of application, 70 percent obtained permanent housing after receiving benefits and 82 percent reported their quality of life improved.

DDA now holds statewide town hall meetings and listening tours to hear directly from its customers and stakeholders.

Making Agency Services Available Online

The Department implemented its plan for an online chat function on its homepage to allow the Department to seamlessly answer and direct questions from customers. As the chart below shows, it has been a great success. To date, the Department has answered more than 1,000 chats through this platform:



Medicaid teamed with Maryland Health Connection to launch a real-time Medicaid site for MCO shopping. This single point of entry for eligibility determinations and MCO plan shopping enhanced the overall customer experience, with 51 percent enrolling completely online.

Through the Maryland Health Care Commission's (MHCC) effort to promote consumer decision-making, it provides extensive information on the quality of hospitals, long term care facilities, and health plans through its online reports published on its website.

MHCCs "Wear the Cost" initiative created an innovative, consumer-focused, price transparency website that enables Marylanders to compare hospital prices for common medical procedures, including the average hospital, physician, and pharmacy costs for four common procedures.

MHCC plans to expand the number of procedures on the site in the future.

The Laboratories Administration has revised processes to enable newborn screening clients to obtain all test results online.

BHA has expanded its tele-psychiatry services, including services in detention centers, to better reach customers, wherever they are.

The Office of Preparedness and Response (OP&R) redesigned its website to improve navigation, public-facing language, and accessibility for blind individuals. The website now includes a fact sheet in nine languages for those with limited English proficiency. The redesign allows the public to access emergency resources, better understand of the office's scope of work, and contact employees for more information. This redesign is considered a best practice for accessible, public-facing content.

OP&R led public health agencies in compliance training, so all public health information is accessible for blind, deaf, or otherwise disabled individuals. Several trainings have been provided across the state and region to ensure websites, social media, and additional digital materials meet federal compliance guidelines.

Processing Times for Customer Transactions

The Health Care Financing division processed 93 percent of its Medicaid enrollment applications within 24 hours. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services reports that the national mean is 32 percent.

BHA centralized hospital admissions to better track and respond to court orders and to expedite and find appropriate placements for patients to meet mandates. As a result, BHA successfully placed individuals with certain (8-507) court orders within 21 days required by legislation and achieved placement for others within seven days. Additional efforts are underway to improve discharge planning through centralization and standardization.

Since Oct. 1, 2017, the Department has placed 483 defendants into substance use treatment in an average cycle time of 10 days.

At Spring Grove Hospital Center, timely completion for interdisciplinary treatment plans are 97 percent, discharge summaries are 97 percent, aftercare planning are 97 percent, and transfer notes are 96 percent.

VSA is in the process of digitizing older records stored on microfilm and paper. Once this project is complete, the process of accessing and printing certified copies of these older records will be dramatically faster, greatly improving customer response times.

Adjusting Hours to Meet Customer Demands

The Department stands ready 24 hours a day, 365 days per year to respond to emergent health events. Several Department programs have adjusted employee schedules and business operating hours to adapt to the evolving needs, demands, and activities of our customers.

Meetings are often scheduled before or after normal business hours to better meet the needs of customers and are frequently held at various locations, within local communities, throughout the state.

Social Media Usage to Improve the Customer Experience

The Department engages with constituents through Departmental Facebook and Twitter accounts, while connecting with individuals on a more granular level through administration and office specific accounts.

The Department's Facebook page currently has 2,436 followers and 2,420 likes. The Department's Twitter page has 5,839 followers and 2,503 likes.

Examples of administration and office specific accounts include, but are not limited to:

- MHCC has a well-developed social media presence on both Twitter and Facebook.

 MHCC also has branded Twitter and Facebook pages for its "Wear the Cost" price transparency initiative. Content is posted on their social media accounts at least three times per week.

 LinkedIn is another tool being used for social engagement with professionals in the field
- BHA uses Facebook to increase bi-directional communication among behavioral health peer recovery specialists
- DDA uses Facebook to communicate with the public and has nearly 2,000 followers, who share the latest DDA information, newsletters, webinars, and instructional videos

Conclusion

In conclusion, the Department shares the Governor's commitment to providing exceptional customer service. This report offers a glimpse into the work we have been doing to improve upon the customer service experience. As we build upon the improvements we've made to date, we will continue to look for new and better ways to put the customer at the center of everything we do, while encouraging a philosophy of outstanding service delivery within the Department.

